

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 103675
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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 SS-15 NSCE-00 /028 R

DRAFTED BY EUR/WE:MCRAMERUS
APPROVED BY EUR: R. E. BARBOUR
NSC:GTREVERTON
S/S-O - RCASTRODALE
P - JFORBES

-----020908 221729Z /45

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY VALLETTA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 103675

E.O. 11652:XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, MT

SUBJECT: MINTOFF LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER

1. TEXT OF MINTOFF LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT DELIVERED BY
DR. FELICE TO UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM FOLLOWS:

2. BEGIN TEXT: DEAR MR. PRESIDENT,

MY COLLEAGUES AND I HAVE NOTED THE INTEREST SHOWN BY THE
UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IN THE STATUS OF MALTA FOLLOWING
THE CLOSURE OF THE BRITISH BASE AT THE END OF MARCH 1979.

AS FAR BACK AS JULY, 1976, THE THEN SECRETARY OF STATE
MR KISSINGER PROMISED IN WRITING TO GIVE HIS DEFINITIVE
VIEWS ON THIS MATTER AS THE DATE DREW CLOSER. UNOFFICIAL
CONTACTS WITH NATO AND THE PRONOUNCEMENT MADE TO THE
ITALIAN PRESS LAST FEBRUARY BY ADMIRAL SHEAR, COMMANDER-
IN-CHIEF SOUTHERN EUROPE, CONFIRM THAT THE TIME IS NOW
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RIPE FOR THE UNITED STATES TO TAKE A STAND.

WE HAVE EVIDENCE TO PROVE THAT THE DEMOCRATIC RULERS OF
WESTERN GERMANY, FRANCE AND ITALY, AS WELL AS THE LEADERS

OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL ARE VIEWING WITH FAVOR
MALTA'S DECISION TO BECOME A NEUTRAL STATE. TOWARDS

THIS END THE ITALIAN DEMOCRISTIAN LEADERS HAVE THE ENTHUSIASTIC BACKING OF ALL THE PARTIES SUSTAINING THEM IN OFFICE. I AM NOT MENTIONING THE MORAL SUPPORT WHICH OUR PROPOSED NEUTRALITY IS RECEIVING FROM COUNTRIES SUCH AS TUNISIA, SPAIN, YUGOSLAVIA, MOROCCO, SAUDI ARABIA, THE EMIRATES, KUWAIT, ETC BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT SO DIRECTLY INVOLVED AND INTEGRATED IN THE UNITED STATES-ORIENTATED DEFENCE SYSTEM. INDEED, NOT ONLY IS THERE SUCH A CONSENSUS OF SUPPORT BUT WE KNOW OF NO COUNTRY WHICH HAS DIRECTLY OPPOSED US IN THIS COURSE.

THERE IS ALSO A CONSENSUS OF OPINION THAT MALTA'S ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL FOUNDATIONS NEED URGENT STRENGTHENING IF THIS STATE OF NEUTRALITY IS NOT TO BE FRAGILE AND CONSEQUENTLY SHORT-LIVED. THIS POINT IS APPRECIATED MOST CLEARLY BY OUR NEIGHBOURING MEDITERRANEAN STATES WHO HAVE FOLLOWED VERY CLOSELY OUR GREAT EFFORTS TO BUILD A NEW MALTA WITH INDUSTRIES THRIVING ON PEACEFUL ACTIVITIES AS AGAINST THE TOTAL DEPENDENCE OF OUR COUNTRY ON FOREIGN DEFENSE EXPENDITURE IN THE RECENT PAST. WE HAVE IN FACT ALREADY BEEN ASKED TO QUANTIFY THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT THAT WILL BE REQUIRED DURING THE FIRST QUINQUENNIAL AFTER MARCH, 1979. WE HAVE ALSO BEEN ASKED TO GIVE AS CLEAR A DEFINITION AS POSSIBLE OF THE TYPE OF NEUTRALITY MALTA WISHES TO CHOOSE FOR HERSELF.

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WHAT IS NOW LACKING IS THE WILL BY THE GOVERNMENTS OF WESTERN EUROPE TO CONCLUDE WITH US THE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN DRAGGING FOR OVER THREE YEARS. ITALY, FOR INSTANCE, WHICH HAS MOST TO GAIN OR TO LOSE BY A GOOD OR BAD CHOICE ON OUR PART, WISHES THAT THE FINANCIAL BURDEN - ALTHOUGH INFINITESIMALLY SMALL COMPARED WITH EVEN HER OWN DEFENSE EXPENDITURE - BE SHARED BY THE BIG COUNTRIES OF THE WESTERN ALLIANCE. THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT HAS ALREADY COMMITTED ITSELF TO CONTRIBUTE AFTER MARCH, 1979 AS MUCH AS IT DOES NOW UNDER THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR RUNNING A BRITISH BASE IN MALTA. WHILST, THEREFORE, IT IS CLEAR THAT THEY ARE KEEN TO CONCLUDE, THEY CLAIM THAT THEY ARE BEING HELD UP BY THE SLOWNESS OF THE PROGRESS THEY ARE MAKING IN THEIR APPROACHES TO THEIR WESTERN FRIENDS.

THESE UNFORTUNATE DELAYS, TOGETHER WITH THE DANGEROUS SITUATION WHICH HAS DEVELOPED IN NORTH AFRICA WITH THE OUTBREAK OF EGYPTIAN-LIBYAN HOSTILITIES AND THE WAR IN ETHIOPIA, HAVE BROUGHT UPON US NEW PROBLEMS WHICH JEOPARDIZE ALL THE GAINS WE HAVE MADE IN THE PAST YEARS.

WE HAVE HAD TO RESIST ECONOMIC PRESSURES WHICH WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN CONVERGING UPON US IF WE HAD NOT BEEN AS CONSISTENT IN OUR STAND FOR A STATUS OF NEUTRALITY AFTER MARCH, 1979. OBVIOUSLY THE NON-WESTERN COUNTRIES, WHO ALSO HAVE A GREAT STAKE IN MALTA'S STATUS, CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO RUSH IN WITH THEIR ECONOMIC OR FINANCIAL SUPPORT IF THEY ARE LED TO BELIEVE - AS INDEED THEY HAVE BEEN - THEIR PRO-WESTERN COUNTERPARTS ARE NOT READY TO FORK OUT THEIR SHARE. SHOULD A PROPER WESTERN RESPONSE BE LACKING AND A WESTERN VOID CREATED ONE NATURALLY EXPECTS THE NON-WEST TO PRESS FOR A POLITICAL SOLUTION WHICH WOULD EXPLOIT MALTA'S STRATEGIC POSITION TO THEIR MILITARY BENEFIT.

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THIS EXPLAINS, MR. PRESIDENT, WHY I HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO ASK FOR YOUR DIRECT SUPPORT IN THIS EXERCISE WHICH WILL AFFECT THE FUTURE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN FOR MANY YEARS TO COME. DURING THE TALKS ON ZIMBABWE HELD IN MALTA I HAVE HAD THE GOOD FORTUNE TO MEET YOUR AMBASSADOR MR ANDREW YOUNG WHO SPOKE VERY HIGHLY OF YOUR GOOD INTENTIONS TOWARDS ALL THOSE WHO SERVE IN THE RANKS OF PEACE. HE ALSO TOLD ME THAT IT WAS ONLY PRESSURE OF OTHER GLOBAL COMMITMENTS WHICH WERE PREVENTING THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FROM ACTIVELY ENCOURAGING THEIR WESTERN FRIENDS TO CONCLUDE THEIR LONG NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE MALTESE SIDE.

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VERY SINCERELY YOURS
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DOM MINTOFF
PRIME MINISTER END TEXT

CHRISTOPHER

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ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NSC-05 /018 R

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DRAFTED BY:EUR/RPM:PBSWIERS
APPROVED BY:EUR/RPM:PBSWIERS
EUR/WE:MCRAMERUS
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
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USDOCOSOUTH
USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 103675

FOL STATE 103675 SENT ACTION VALLETTA APR 22, 1978
REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

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PRIME MINISTER END TEXT.
CHRISTOPHER UNQUOTE VANCE

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESIDENT, TEXT, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS, NEUTRALISM, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE103675
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: MCRAMERUS
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780172-0865
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
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Litigation History:
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Office: ORIGIN EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2877935
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MINTOFF LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER
TAGS: PFOR, PPDC, MT, (CARTER, JIMMY), (MINTOFF, DOMINIC)
To: VALLETTA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/5a0954a9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
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